

County of Los Angeles

Office of the Sheriff
Hall of Justice
Los Angeles, California 90012



SHERMAN BLOCK, SHERIFF

November 3, 1992

Deputy Curtis Golden, #[redacted]
[redacted]

Dear Deputy Golden:

On September 25, 1992, you were served with a letter of the Department's intention to impose discipline against you. Attached to that letter were copies of several related sections of the Department's Policy Manual. Some of those attachments did not reflect the policies in place at the time of the incident. Enclosed are the manual sections which accurately reflect the relevant policies which were in place on the date of this incident, March 1, 1990.

All decisions relating to policy violations and discipline in this matter were made based on the policies which were in place on March 1, 1990.

This notification in no way alters the Department's determinations and processes as they relate to this investigation.

Sincerely,

SHERMAN BLOCK, SHERIFF

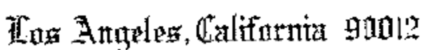
ORIGINAL SIGNED

JAMES M. CALLAS, COMMANDER
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL AND
ETHICAL STANDARDS

File #091-1080



SHERMAN BLOCK, SHERIFF



County of Los Angeles
Office of the Sheriff
Hall of Justice
Los Angeles, California 90012



November 3, 1992

Deputy Curtis Golden, #[redacted]
[redacted]

Dear Deputy Golden:

On September 25, 1992, you were served with a Letter of Intention indicating your right to respond to the Sheriff's Department's pending disciplinary action against you, as reported under File Number 091-1080. You were also advised of your right to review the material on which the discipline was based.

You did exercise your right to respond, and did review the material on September 30, 1992. However, after review and consideration of the response submitted to support your position, your Division Chief determined that the recommended discipline is appropriate.

You are hereby notified that you are discharged from your position of Deputy Sheriff, Item No. 2708A, with this Department, effective at the close of business on November 3, 1992.

This action is based on the fact that you have violated the following sections of this Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures, Policy and Ethics Chapter:

3-01/030.10(e)	Obedience to Laws, Regulations, and Orders
3-01/030.20	Use of Force
3-01/030.25	Reporting the Use of Force
3-01/030.30	Use of Firearms
3-01/040.70	False Statements
3-01/040.75	Failure to Make Statements, and/or Making False Statements During Departmental Investigations.
5-09/210.15	Vehicle Operations and Tactics

5-09/210.20 Use of Firearms During Pursuits

An investigation conducted by the Internal Affairs Bureau, coupled with your own statements, has established that on Thursday, March 1, 1990, you were on duty in a black and white patrol car in the Lynwood Station area. Your partner on that date, Deputy Douglas Gillies, was driving the car. At approximately 0050 hours, you saw a silver 1985 Volvo, which was travelling southbound on Butler Avenue from Myrrh Street in the East Compton area. You observed there were two male blacks and a male Hispanic in the car. The male Hispanic was seated in the front passenger seat and appeared to be "tremendously scared." Deputy Gillies made a U-turn and followed the Volvo.

As you and your partner followed behind the Volvo, you saw a shotgun thrown from the rear passenger side door. This weapon was later recovered by other deputies from in front of [redacted] Butler Avenue. You continued to follow the Volvo onto Elizabeth Street, where you saw a handgun thrown from the car. This weapon was not recovered. You and your partner attempted to initiate a traffic stop of the Volvo, which pulled to a stop short of the limit line at Harris Avenue and Alondra Boulevard. Once the Volvo had come to a stop, the back seat passenger, an unidentified male black adult, exited and stood on the sidewalk. After you and Deputy Gillies had begun to approach the vehicle and suspect, the driver of the car, Arthur Jones, accelerated away. You and your partner left the unidentified male black on the sidewalk and pursued the Volvo in your radio car.

You and your partner pursued the Volvo eastbound on Alondra Boulevard to Atlantic Avenue, where the vehicle slowed. It appeared to you that Arthur Jones leaned over and opened the passenger side door. The male Hispanic exited the Volvo and walked southbound into a gas station parking lot. Jones then accelerated away. You and Deputy Gillies left the male Hispanic and continued the pursuit of the Volvo. The male Hispanic was later contacted by other deputies, who determined that he had been kidnapped and robbed at gun point by Arthur Jones, and the other unidentified male black.

You and your partner followed the Volvo onto the southbound Long Beach Freeway. Jones exited the freeway onto northbound Long Beach Boulevard and continually slowed his vehicle as he drove around the area. You said this led you to believe that Jones possibly lived in the area and was attempting to get back home. After a short while, Jones drove onto the eastbound Artesia freeway from Long Beach Boulevard. You made a mistake and broadcast that you were headed westbound on the Artesia Freeway. Shortly thereafter, a Sheriff's Aero unit arrived and corrected the error. The Aero unit also began to broadcast information related to the pursuit.

The pursuit continued eastbound on the Artesia Freeway to Downey Avenue, where Jones got off and drove northbound to Park Street. Jones turned eastbound on Park Street from Downey Avenue to southbound on Lakewood Boulevard. He re-entered the freeway travelling westbound, only to exit the freeway again at Downey Avenue, and re-trace his route back onto Park Street. As you pursued Jones eastbound on Park Street from Downey Avenue for the second time, you saw a

radio car which was stopped sideways in the middle of the street at the intersection of Park Street and Lakewood Boulevard. You saw one deputy visible between the radio car and the north curb.

You stated Jones made no effort to stop the Volvo, noticeably accelerating toward the deputy who was standing near the curb. You did not know who this deputy was or if there was a second deputy with him. You saw the lone deputy dive out of the way as the Volvo passed, then heard a shot fired. You said you did not know where the shot had come from or who had fired it. You did not know if any other radio cars were in the pursuit with you at this time. You said that under the given circumstances, the tactics employed by the deputy, or deputies, at the intersection, did not appear to be safe.

Arthur Jones appeared to lose control of the Volvo as he turned northbound onto Lakewood Boulevard from Park Street. You saw the Volvo spin in the street and come to rest facing southbound on Lakewood Boulevard in front of a car dealership. You and Deputy Gillies stopped in front of the Volvo, offset to the left, approximately 2-3 car lengths away. You thought that the Volvo was going to remain immobile. In the homicide report of the incident, it is indicated that you exited your radio car and "at this point Deputy Golden walked to the right of his door slightly in front and observed the suspect's vehicle accelerate at a high rate of speed towards him. Fearing that he was going to be struck by the suspect's vehicle, Deputy Golden fired six rounds from his weapon at the driver of the vehicle, and as he fired the last round, Deputy Golden jumped back into his radio car, slamming the front door to avoid being struck by the suspect's vehicle."

In a subsequent interview with investigators from the Internal Affairs Bureau, you said you had begun to run up to the Volvo when you saw Jones turning his steering wheel. You said this action led you to believe that Jones was preparing to drive in your direction. You stated Jones appeared to be dazed. As you turned to run back to your radio car, you began firing in his direction. You claimed you believed that Jones had begun driving in your direction, but that it was possible you had fired your first shot "a split second before" the Volvo had begun to move. You said you had barely gotten back into the radio car as the Volvo passed.

A civilian witness to this incident said that the Volvo had made a U-turn in the street in front of the car dealership, with the radio car making a turn along side of it. The witness said he saw the passenger deputy open his door, lean out of the vehicle, and begin shooting at the rear tires of the Volvo. You denied that this occurred.

After firing at the Volvo, and re-entering the radio car, you and Deputy Gillies turned and followed Jones. As you turned, you heard a single gunshot. You did not know where the shot had come from, or who had fired it. You saw there were several radio cars present at this time. As you prepared to broadcast that shots had been fired, you heard another deputy broadcasting this information. You did not know if this deputy had fired any shots, or if he was broadcasting on your behalf. The pursuit re-entered the Artesia Freeway from southbound on Lakewood Boulevard and headed eastbound. Jones exited the freeway at Bellflower Boulevard and drove south to Artesia Boulevard, where he turned right and proceeded westbound.

While following the Volvo, which was travelling westbound in the eastbound lanes of traffic, you saw Deputy Mann shooting at the Volvo. You recalled that Deputy Mann and his partner, Deputy Anderson, were travelling to the right of your radio car when Mann fired. There was no other traffic that you could see, as other radio cars had the intersections blocked off. You said you were not surprised that Mann was shooting at the Volvo, and believed that his tactics were sound, in that he had a good picture of what he was shooting at. You said the surrounding area was mainly a business district, with no other traffic present. You stated you and Deputy Gillies were in the lead vehicle, with Deputies Mann and Anderson adjacent to you. You said you did not know how many other radio cars were present.

Shortly after Deputy Mann had fired at the Volvo, Jones lost control of the car and spun out on the center divider east of Cherry Street, facing in a northeasterly direction. You said normally after a pursuit, Department tactics call for a "felony stop" to be made on the driver of a suspect vehicle. You described this procedure as having 2-3 radio cars fan out behind the suspect vehicle, calling the suspect out of the car, and having him walk back toward the deputies. You said "felony stop" tactics were not used in this instance for reasons such as the final positioning of Jones' car, the fact that Jones had immediately exited his car, coupled with the fact that shots had been fired, and there were a number of deputies at the scene who were "excited from the whole situation," and wanted to get Jones into custody.

In the homicide report of the incident, it is indicated that after stopping your radio car and exiting, you, "...observed the suspect (to) exit the vehicle with his hands up. The deputies approached and Deputy Golden observed Deputy Running attempt to grab the suspect. At this time, the suspect pulled away, placing his hands toward his waist. Deputy Golden, fearing that the suspect was going for an additional weapon, struck the suspect four to five times on the head with his flashlight. The suspect was then arrested at the location."

In your interview with investigators from the Internal Affairs Bureau, you said after Deputy Gillies had positioned your radio car in close proximity to the rear of the Volvo, you had exited and observed Jones get out of his car with his hands up. You saw that Jones was bleeding from the facial area and observed what appeared to be a bullet hole in the windshield of the Volvo. You said Jones was facing directly toward you. You said other deputies then confronted Jones from behind and that Jones began fighting with them. You stated the deputies were grabbing Jones' hands in an attempt to control him.

You said Deputy Running "took the suspect down" from the waist and that you lost sight of what was going on. You said you had to run around to the driver side of the Volvo in order to see. You stated you then assisted Deputies Running and Brownell. You said Brownell was attempting to pin Jones down and handcuff him, while Running was trying to keep Jones pinned down on the ground by using his body weight. You said you did not see either Running or Brownell strike Jones. You saw Jones had a handcuff on one wrist. With his free hand, you said you saw Jones reach under his body toward his waistband. Jones was chest down on the street. You said there were other deputies present, but that you did not know what they were doing.

You claimed you thought it was Deputy Brownell who said that Jones was "going for a gun." Combined with everything else that had happened, you said you decided to hit Jones on the head with your flashlight. Due to the number of deputies present, you said it would have been "foolish" to engage in gunfire. You said you hit Jones 4-5 times on the head and possibly the neck area. You said Jones was struggling fiercely and you may have hit him on different sides of the head. Immediately after being struck, you said Jones stopped struggling. You stated you did not see who completed handcuffing Jones, as you immediately turned away.

You said when you struck Jones, you had been trying to "knock him out or make him stop what he had been reaching for." You said you had no intention of "hitting him, just to tap him." You said you could "guarantee" that you had hit him as hard as you could. You said you had every intention of hitting Jones on the head, although you did not think you had hit him hard enough to have killed him. You stated your concern had been to stop Jones from what he was doing, and if Jones were to die from the head strikes, "then so be it."

You said you reported your use of force to Field Sergeant Coleman, as well as your Watch Commander that night, Lieutenant Burgess. You also said you had reported your actions to the homicide investigators during your interview with them. Lieutenant Burgess has stated that no one, including yourself, reported having used physical force on Jones. You failed to report your use of force to your Watch Commander, as required.

During your interview with investigators from the Internal Affairs Bureau, you were shown photographs of Arthur Jones, which had been taken during the autopsy on his body. You said it was possible that you had inflicted all of the injuries to Jones' head, neck and face. You described your blows as having been made in a quick "back-and-forth" type motion. You thought that the blows to the back of Jones' head caused corresponding damage to his face as it struck concrete. When shown the photographs which depict the injuries to Jones' back, you said that you had not hit him in that area and could not explain how he had received those injuries. You said this incident had occurred at the end of a pursuit and that you had not seen everything that had gone on. You attempted to attribute some of the injuries to Jones as having been caused by his own actions prior to spinning out on the center divider.

Contrary to your statements, a number of deputies observed you strike Jones with your flashlight prior to his falling to the ground. One deputy said he saw you strike Jones on the head with your flashlight as Jones was falling to the ground. Two other deputies said they saw you strike Jones on the head with your flashlight, and only then did Jones fall to the ground. Yet another deputy said he had been one of the first to contact Jones after he had exited the Volvo. He said he had grabbed hold of Jones, when you moved him aside and confronted Jones, along with a number of other deputies. Prior to that, the deputy saw no actions by Jones which would have justified his being struck on the head with a flashlight.

Investigation revealed that after Arthur Jones exited the Volvo with his hands raised, he was confronted by a number of deputy personnel. He had already sustained what would later be

determined as a fatal gunshot wound to his face. During the course of his arrest at the scene, he received severe head trauma, including two depressed skull fractures, a fractured orbit of his right eye, as well as numerous lacerations, abrasions and contusions to his face. He also received a significant amount of blunt force trauma to his body. Among other injuries to Jones, were numerous welts which appeared to run horizontally across his back from his shoulders to his buttocks. Arthur Jones died on March 4, 1990.

During a subsequent autopsy of Jones' body, the Medical Examiner-Coroner found internal evidence of blunt force trauma to the muscles and deep tissue of his back, shoulders and sides. The Medical Examiner-Coroner concluded that, although the gunshot wound was a fatal injury, the blunt force trauma Jones received after the gunshot wound, contributed to his death. In her letter to Captain Kenneth Smith of the Homicide Bureau, Deputy District Attorney Jodi B. Rafkin, Special Investigations Division, concluded that, ... "the injuries to Mr. Jones that are detailed in the autopsy may indicate that the force used was excessive..."

It is inconceivable that you did not see the other obvious force used on Arthur Jones as he was being taken into custody by yourself and other deputies. Instead of telling the truth about your own actions and the actions of other personnel which you witnessed at the scene, you have chosen to make false statements and withhold information.

The injuries sustained by Jones, other than the gunshot wound, cannot be justified when the circumstances are taken into consideration. Jones was virtually surrounded by law enforcement officers, his vehicle was totally disabled, and there was no avenue of escape. He was unarmed and his hands were raised in the air, and he was already suffering from a fatal head wound, with considerable loss of blood. You were unable to explain why you disregarded your training and approached Jones, if you were honestly in fear of his being armed. Under these conditions, the force you used was clearly excessive. Furthermore, it has been determined that the tactics which resulted in your decision to use your firearm, along with the actual firing of your weapon, were in violation of Department policy. Your obvious lack of judgement, credibility, and maturity are incompatable with your continued employment as a sworn peace officer with this Department. Your actions in this matter have also exposed the Department to unnecessary civil liability.

By your actions, you have brought discredit and embarrassment to yourself and the Department.

In taking this disciplinary action, your record with this Department has been considered, and a thorough review of this incident has been made by Department executives, including your Unit and Division Commanders.

You may appeal the Department's action in this matter pursuant to Rules 4.02, 4.05 and 18.02 of the Civil Service Rules.

You may, if you so desire, within fifteen (15) business days from the date of service of this notice of discharge, request a hearing on these charges before the Los Angeles County Civil Service Commission, 222 North Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90012.

The Sheriff's Department reserves the right to amend and/or add to this letter.

Sincerely,

SHERMAN BLOCK, SHERIFF

ROBERT A. EDMONDS
UNDERSHERIFF

Note: Attached for your convenience are excerpts of the applicable areas of the Manual of Policy and Procedures and Civil Service Rules.

RAE:BJC:MLB:ad

cc: Civil Service Advocacy
Duane T. Preimsberger, Chief, Field Operations Region II
Internal Affairs Bureau
Personnel Services
Payroll Unit
Lynwood Station/Unit Personnel File